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**BIGGLESWADE URBAN
DISTRICT.**

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1925

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF

HEALTH

AND

SANITARY INSPECTOR.



To the Chairman and Members
OF THE
Biggleswade Urban District Council



Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary circumstances of your District for the year 1925.

It has been written as far as possible in accordance with Circular Number 648, dated 10th December, 1925, issued by the Ministry of Health.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Mr. Chaundler, the Clerk of the Council, and his Staff, for their valuable help, and also to your Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector for his loyal co-operation.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

May, 1926.

H. W. GRATTAN.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

| | |
|---|---------|
| Area (acres) | 4,647 |
| Population (1921) | 5,395 |
| Number of inhabited houses (1921) | 1,280 |
| Number of families or separate occupiers (1921) | 1,290 |
| Rateable Value | £36,380 |
| Assessable Value | £20,362 |
| Sum represented by a penny rate | £78 |

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Population.

The estimated mid-yearly figure of 5,574 is supplied for the purpose of this report by the Registrar-General from the best data available for his use at the moment.

| | Total. | M. | F. |
|--------------------|--------|----|----|
| Illegitimate | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Legitimate | 97 | 57 | 40 |
| Birth Rate 17.94. | | | |

The birth-rate for the whole of England and Wales for the year 1925 was 18.3.

Deaths.

| | Total. | M. | F. |
|-----------------------------------|--------|----|----|
| Civilians only (all causes) | 63 | 41 | 22 |
| Death Rate 11.12. | | | |

The death rate from all causes for the whole of England and Wales for 1925, was 12.2

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth | From Sepsis ... 0 |
| | „ Other causes 0 |

7 deaths occurred in infants under one year of age, and the death rate per 1,000 births was 70.0.

The corresponding rate for the whole of England and Wales was 75.

| | |
|---|---|
| Deaths from Measles (all ages) | 0 |
| „ „ Whooping Cough (all ages) | 0 |
| „ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age) | 0 |

The following table gives the causes of death:—

| | Males. | Females. |
|--|--------|----------|
| Small-pox | 0 | 0 |
| Influenza | 0 | 0 |
| Tuberculosis of respiratory system | 3 | 1 |
| Other Tuberculous Disease | 0 | 0 |
| Cancer (malignant disease) | 11 | 3 |
| Diabetes | 1 | 0 |
| Cerebral Hæmorrhage. &c. | 4 | 0 |
| Heart Disease | 6 | 4 |
| Arterio-sclerosis | 2 | 0 |
| Bronchitis | 1 | 5 |
| Pneumonia (all forms) | 1 | 0 |
| Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum | 1 | 0 |
| Acute and Chronic Nephritis | 1 | 0 |

| Congenital Debility and Malformation, | | Males. | Females. |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------|----------|
| Premature Birth | | 2 | 1 |
| Suicide | | 1 | 0 |
| Other deaths from violence | | 2 | 0 |
| Other defined diseases | | 5 | 8 |
| | | 41 | 22 |
| | | — | — |

3.—Infectious Diseases Notified during the Year.

| Disease. | Total Cases notified. | Cases admitted to Hospital | Total Deaths. |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Paratyphoid B. Fever | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Pneumonia | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Chicken Pox | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| Erysipelas | 2 | 0 | 0 |

TUBERCULOSIS.

| Age Periods. | New Cases. | | | | Deaths. | | | |
|--------------|------------|---|----------------|---|------------|---|----------------|---|
| | Pulmonary. | | Non-Pulmonary. | | Pulmonary. | | Non-Pulmonary. | |
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| 0 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 5 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | — |
| 10 | — | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 15 | 1 | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | — |
| 20 | — | 1 | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 25 | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — |
| 35 | — | 1 | — | 1 | — | — | — | — |
| 45 | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |
| 55 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 65 & upward | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Totals | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | — | — |

As regards the 4 deaths from tuberculosis, the disease had been previously notified in respect of 3 of the cases.

Analysis of the Total Cases Notified under Age-Groups

| Disease. | Under 1 yr. | 1 to 2 | 2 to 3 | 3 to 4 | 4 to 5 | 5 to 10 | 10 to 15 | 15 to 20 | 20 to 35 | 35 to 45 | 45 to 65 | 65 and over |
|----------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| Paratyphoid Fever .. | — | — | — | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Pneumonia | — | 1 | — | 1 | 1 | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — |
| Chicken Pox | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 2 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Erysipelas | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 1 | 1 |

4.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

There is nothing specially noteworthy to be recorded under this heading.

5.—SUMMARY (for REFERENCE) of NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

None is provided by this Authority, but the County Council employs a Health Visitor for certain work which it undertakes in the district.

The Sister-in-Charge of the Red Cross Medical Supply Depot does a considerable amount of nursing in the district.

Midwives.

Registration and employment supervised by the County Council.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre is carried on under the County Council in Biggleswade.

A Tuberculosis Centre is also carried on under the County Council in Biggleswade.

The Venereal Disease Centre at Bedford is provided by the County Council.

In addition to the above, special mention must be made of the Red Cross Medical Supply Depot, which has been established in Crab Lane, Biggleswade. The Staff of this Institution consists of a Commandant, Assistant Commandant, Quartermaster and Assistant Quartermaster. The Depot is in charge of 1 Sister and 2 V.A.D.'s. and is open daily from 10 to 11 a.m. for the dressing of wounds, and other cases requiring daily attention. Patients pay a small weekly fee, and are only received on the recommendation of doctors practising in the district.

Nursing appliances are provided for use in the sick room at a nominal charge. This Association is doing most valuable work and should be supported with enthusiasm by all who have the welfare of the district at heart.

Hospitals Provided or Subsidised by the Local Authority or by the County Council.

| Hospital. | Situation. | Authority. | Accommodation. |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| (1) Tuberculosis .. | Mogerhanger Park | County Council | — |
| (2) Maternity | None. | | |
| (3) Children | None. | | |
| (4) Fever | Biggleswade | Jointly with Biggleswade R D. | 22 Beds. |
| (5) Smallpox | Biggleswade | Jointly with Biggleswade R D. | 12 Beds. |
| (6) Mental | Stotfold | County Council | — |
| (7) Infirmary | Biggleswade | Guardians | — |
| (6) Other | Infirmary. | Guardians. | — |
| | Mental Hospital (Stotfold) | County Council. | — |

Institutional Provision for Unmarried Mothers, Illegitimate Infants and Homeless Children.

None except that provided by the Guardians.

Ambulance Facilities.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (a) For Infectious cases. | } One Motor Ambulance stationed at the Isolation Hospital |
| (b) For Non-infectious and accident cases | |

6.—LABORATORY WORK.

Bacteriological Examinations.

Arrangements are made whereby medical men practising in the town can obtain free Bacteriological examinations in cases of Diphtheria, Typhoid Fever, Tuberculosis and Meningitis. These examinations are carried out by the Lister Institute.

Provision of Antitoxin.

A supply of diphtheria Antitoxin is kept at the Isolation Hospital and is issued free to Medical Men on request.

Tetanus Antitoxin is supplied by the County Council, Shire Hall, Bedford, similarly,

Arrangements have been made by the Ministry of Health for a supply of Botulinus Antitoxin Serum, which can be obtained on application to the Medical Officer of Health, Guildhall, Cambridge.

Public Health Acts Adopted.

Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890. Part III.

Bye-Laws or Regulations are in force in respect of:

Common Lodging-houses.
Slaughter-houses.
Cleansing of Footways.
Removal of House Refuse.
Cleansing of Privies.
Prevention of Nuisances.
Keeping of Animals.
Offensive Trades.
New Streets and Buildings.
Dairies, Cowsheds, Milkshops, etc.

7.—SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

A summary of the work of the Sanitary Department during the year will be found in the report of the Sanitary Inspector at the end of this report.

8.—PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

One Medical Officer of Health (part time only), one Sanitary Inspector, who is also Inspector of Foods, and in addition is Surveyor and Water Engineer to the District.

9.—HOUSING.

After the war the Council adopted a scheme for the erection of a number of houses in the district. Forty houses have been completed and occupied on the Dells site and fifty-two on the Town Field (Newtown) site. The grant of a subsidy by the Government has been an advantage. During the period under revision (1921—1925 inclusive) 93 houses have been erected, and the Government subsidy was granted in respect of 81 of these.

Notwithstanding this progress there is still an urgent need for more houses for the working classes. I am delighted to say that the problem of providing more houses has now been tackled in a most enterprising and energetic manner.

On 15th September 1925, plans for 41 houses were approved and all of these are in course of erection on the Town Field site. In addition plans for 90 more houses on the same site have been approved.

When these houses are complete it will then be possible to deal with some of the existing houses which are unfit for habitation.

The following is a summary of the Housing work completed up to the end of the year:—

Number of new houses erected or in course of erection during the year:—

| | |
|---|----|
| (a) Total | 54 |
| (b) As part of a municipal housing scheme | 52 |

1. Unfit Dwelling Houses.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)..... | 239 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910..... | 0 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 2 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 87 |

2. Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notice.

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers | 98 |
|--|----|

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

| | |
|---|--------|
| A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919 | } NIL. |
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit ... | |
| (a) by owners | |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declaration by owners of intention to close | |

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

| | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 1 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied : | |
| (a) by owners | 1 |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | — |

C.—Proceedings under Section 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909.

| | |
|--|---|
| (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders | 2 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made | 1 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit | 0 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | 0 |
| (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Order | 0 |

CENSUS RETURNS.

The following information is taken from the Census of England and Wales,
1921—County of Bedford.

ACREAGE, POPULATION, PRIVATE FAMILIES AND DWELLINGS.

| | Area in Statute Acres (Land and Inland Water) | Total Population. | | | | | Private Families and Dwellings. | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------|---------|-------|---------|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| | | 1911 | 1921 | | | | Private Families. | Population in private Families. | Structurally separate Dwellings occupied. | Rooms occupied. | Rooms per Person |
| | | Persons | Persons | Males | Females | Persons per Acre | | | | | |
| a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i | j | k | l |
| Biggleswade U.D. and C.P. | 4,647 | 5,375 | 5,395 | 2,661 | 2,734 | 1.2 | 1,290 | 5,153 | 1,280 | 6,423 | 1.25 |

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Year ending December 31st, 1925.

Housing.

Satisfactory progress continues to be made in the erection of houses by private enterprise, under the provisions of the Housing Acts of 1923-1924.

During the year plans for 39 houses were approved for subsidy, and 27 houses were completed and occupied.

Since the commencement of operations under the Housing Act of 1923, plans for 108 subsidy houses have been approved, of which number 93 have been completed.

In September, 1925, the Council approved plans for the erection of 41 non-parlour and three-bedroom houses on a portion of the Town Field site. Work on these was commenced in November and very satisfactory progress has been made. Plans for the development of the whole of this site, providing for the erection of a further 90 houses, have now been approved, and the erection of these houses will shortly be commenced.

Building Plans.

The following plans were approved by the Council:

| | |
|--|----|
| Houses subsidised under the Housing Acts of 1923 and 1924. | 39 |
| Non subsidised houses | 3 |
| Alterations to existing premises | 12 |
| Rebuilding existing premises | 1 |
| Garages, workshops, etc. | 7 |

Housing and Sanitary Defects.

196 Premises have been inspected for Sanitary of Housing Defects. Informal notices for the abatement of nuisances or the remedy of defects were given as follows:—

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| To provide new drains | 4 |
| Defective and obstructed drains | 121 |
| Defective W.C.'s | 54 |
| Dirty and dilapidated premises | 11 |
| To provide covered ashbins | 13 |

Seven houses were disinfected after infectious disease or on the request of the occupiers.

Meat and Food Inspection.

There are 5 registered, and one licensed slaughter-houses in the District. The structural condition of these, and the standard of cleanliness maintained, is good. Ninety-two inspections were made, and two notices to cleanse and lime-wash were given.

Retail shops and stores have been visited. The following were condemned and destroyed as unfit for human consumption:

Two tuberculous carcasses of beef.

Two carcasses of unsound pork.

Four quantities of tinned food.

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Ten persons are registered as Cowkeepers and Dairymen. Twenty-two inspections have been made to these premises and 3 notices to cleanse and lime-wash have been given.

Workshops.

The following Workshops were on the register at the end of the year:—

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|--|---|
| Bakers | 10 | Printers | 3 |
| Millers | 3 | Tailors and Dressmakers | 7 |
| Motor & Cycle Engineers, etc. | 17 | Bootmakers | 9 |
| Joiners | 6 | Wireless Apparatus Manu- facturer | 1 |
| Photographic Works | 1 | | |
| Plumbers | 3 | | |

Two notices to remedy defective sanitary accommodation were given.

Bakehouses.

There are ten bakehouses in the district. These have been inspected periodically. Three notices to cleanse and limewash, were given.

Scavenging.

House Scavenging is carried out by a 1 ton motor tipping waggon, and two men, the refuse being conveyed to dumps on the outskirts of the town.

The number of houses served is 1338. The average weight of refuse removed per day is $5\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and the average cost of removal per ton is 5/7d.

Sewerage.

31 Houses were connected to the sewers during the year, the total number of premises now connected being 1,346.

Subsidiary six inch diameter sewers, to serve new properties, have been laid as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| London Road | 230 yards. |
| Potton Road | 87 yards. |
| Townfield Housing site | 400 yards. |

Total 717 yards.

The provision of new air compressing machinery at the Sewage Disposal Works, to replace the existing plant, and to provide for future developments of the district is receiving the attention of the Council.

Water Supply.

19 Connections to the mains were made, supplying 37 premises as under:—
Dwelling houses 37

1,428 Premises are now connected to the mains. The population supplied is estimated to be 6,017, and the average consumption per head is 19.20 gallons, including all water used for trade and public purposes.

During 1924 and 1925, 720 yards of 3in. diameter water main were laid in London Road, making the total length of mains in the Urban District 19,045 yards.

THOS. R. HOWITT, Cert. R.S.I.,
M.Inst. M.E.Cy.E.

Sanitary Inspector.

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